

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8622

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL BELFAST

C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 2562

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT EI

SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON IRISH CABINET CHANGES

REF: DUBLIN 2554

1. THE IRISH CABINET CHANGES (REFTEL) REPRESENT VERY LITTLE CHANGE IN IRISH AFFAIRS. IT IS CLEARLY A DEMOTION FOR DEFENSE MINISTER DONEGAN AFTER HIS "THUNDERING DISGRACE" IMBROGLIO A FEW WEEKS AGO (DUBLIN 2264 AND PREVIOUS). SOME ARE INTERPRETING IT AS A "NICE" GESTURE BY COSGRAVE TOWARD THE NEW PRESIDENT, PADDY HILLERY, WHO WAS SWORN IN THE DAY AFTER THE RESHUFFLE. THUS THE PERSON WHO INSULTED THE PRESIDENCY WAS REPRIMANDED. ACCORDING TO OUR CONFIDENTIAL

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BEST INFORMATION COSGRAVE HAS ONLY TAKEN THE DEFENSE

PORFOLIO TEMPORARILY, AND WILL NAME A NEW DEFENSE MINISTER NEXT WEEK, POSSIBLY SLIGHTLY RESHUFFLING THE CABINET AGAIN. EITHER ONE OF TWO PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES, JOHN KELLY OR OLIVER FLANAGAN, IS EXPECTED TO MOVE UP TO A CABINET POSITION AT THAT TIME. THE BETTING FAVORS FLANAGAN. AS USUAL COSGRAVE IS KEEPING QUIET ABOUT HIS INTENTIONS.

2. BOTH FITZPATRICK AND BARRY HAVE BEEN RATHER LACKLUSTER MINISTERS, AND, INDEED, IN A "POPULARITY" POLL LAST YEAR THEY CAME IN NEXT-TO-LAST AND LAST RESPECTIVELY. BOTH ARE NOTED FOR THEIR UNQUESTIONING LOYALTY TO COSGRAVE, AND THIS IS AS GOOD A REASON AS ANY TO ACCOUNT FOR THEIR PROMOTIONS. NEITHER IS EXPECTED TO MAKE WAVES. BARRY'S ELEVATION CAN ALSO BE INTERPRETED AS AN ATTEMPT TO ASSIST FINE GAEL'S FORTUNES IN CORK, HIS CONSTITUENCY. ON THE WHOLE THIS SLIGHT RESHUFFLE IS ABOUT AS NEGATIVE AND INSIGNIFICANT AN EVENT AS COULD BE MANAGED GIVEN THE NECESSITY OF FILLING BURKE'S EDUCATION POSITION. CURLEY

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